Prices of non-Scheduled formulations are fixed by the manufacturers themselves keeping in view the various factors like cost of production, marketing/selling expenses, R&D expenses, trade commission, market competition, product innovation, product quality etc. Prices of these drugs are regularly monitored and corrective measures taken where public interest is found to be adversely affected.

The Government has drafted National Pharmaceutical Policy-2006. After the Policy has been approved, a new Drugs (Prices Control) Order is proposed to be issued. This may include several new measures for better availability of cheaper medicines to the common man. In addition several other measures for making cheaper medicines available to common man are also being contemplated e.g. National Health Insurance Policy for the BPL families. Larger allocation for National illness Assistance Fund/State illness Assistance Funds. District illness Assistance Fund, Revolving Funds for BPL families to be set up in all the Central Government hospitals. States also to set up revolving funds in all the Government hospitals for free treatment of BPL, families, Rajasthan model of Medicare Relief Societies to be replicated in other States. Scheme of District level Drug Bank in States/UTs, Setting up of Cancer Medicines Assistance Fund etc. Besides, it is also proposed to strengthen NPPA for effective monitoring and enforcement of drug prices with the help of State Drug Controllers.

The Cabinet Note on National Pharmaceuticals Policy-2006 was considered by the Cabinet in its meeting held on 11-1-2007. The Cabinet has decided that the matter may, in the first instance, be considered by a Group of Ministers (GoM). A Group of Ministers has been constituted. The 1st meeting of the GoM was held on 10.4.2007. No specific time frame can be mentioned about the announcement of Policy.

Failure of PDS

2765. SHRI RAJ NATH SINGH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Public Distribution System (PDS) in the country is totally a failure;

(b) whether Government are aware that the total supply of wheat, rice and sugar for the BPL card holders are not reaching them and the

shopkeepers are selling all the items in the open market, particularly in Delhi/New Delhi;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the measures being proposed by Government to check the malpractices and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the quantum of wheat, rice and sugar fixed per person per card?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) No, Sir. PDS in the country is not a failure.

(b) The PDS is operated under the joint responsibility of the Central and State Governments. The Central Government has taken the responsibility for procurement, storage, transportation and bulk allocation of foodgrains, etc. The responsibility for effectively distributing the same to the consumers through the network of Fair Price Shops (FPSs) lies with the State Governments. The BPL card holders are getting proper supply of wheat, rice and sugar in the NCT of Delhi.

(c) The question does not arise. However, the Government of NCT of Delhi have taken the following steps to make PDS more transparent and accountable.

(i) Public Audit is introduced.

(ii) Awareness through advertisement, Nukkad Nataks.

(iii) Regular checking of shops by officials.

(iv) Advisory and vigilance committees at circle level.

(v) Citizen watch committees at FPS level.

(d) The quantum of wheat, rice and sugar presently fixed per month per ration card in Delhi/New Delhi for BPL households is as under:

Wheat	=	25 kg.
Rice	=	10 kg.
Sugar	=	06 kg.